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CHARITY AND TRUTH.

A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE ORDINATION OF THE

REV. J. I. T. COOLIDGE.

IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, BOSTON, APRIL 14, 1859.

BY

JOHN COTTON SMITH,

ASSISTANT MINISTER OF TRINITY CHURCH ON THE GREENE FOUNDATION.



BOSTON:

E. P. DUTTON AND COMPANY,

Church Bookstore.

M DCCC LIX.

RIVERSIDE, CAMBRIDGE:
PRINTED BY H. O. HOUGHTON AND COMPANY.

BOSTON, *April 14*, 1859.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER :—

AT our meeting to-day in St. Paul's Lecture Room, it was unanimously voted by the clergy and laity present, to ask of you a copy of your able and timely Sermon preached to-day at the ordination of Mr. Coolidge ; and the undersigned were appointed a Committee to carry the resolution into effect.

By complying with the request you will not only greatly favor us personally, but also confer a large benefit upon the beloved Church of which we are members, and upon the Christian public, for whose best welfare we are bound to exert ourselves.

Your sincere friends and affectionate brethren

in the ministry of the Gospel,

SAMUEL FULLER,

E. M. P. WELLS,

E. L. DROWN.

BOSTON, *April 15*, 1859.

REV. AND DEAR BRETHREN :—

I have received your kind letter requesting a copy of my Sermon for publication. I cannot well refuse a request the granting of which is, in your opinion, likely to be productive of good.

I should have been glad to enlarge upon some of the points contained in the Sermon ; but as you have, in a certain sense, indorsed it, by requesting its publication, I feel bound to publish it, if at all, just as it was delivered.

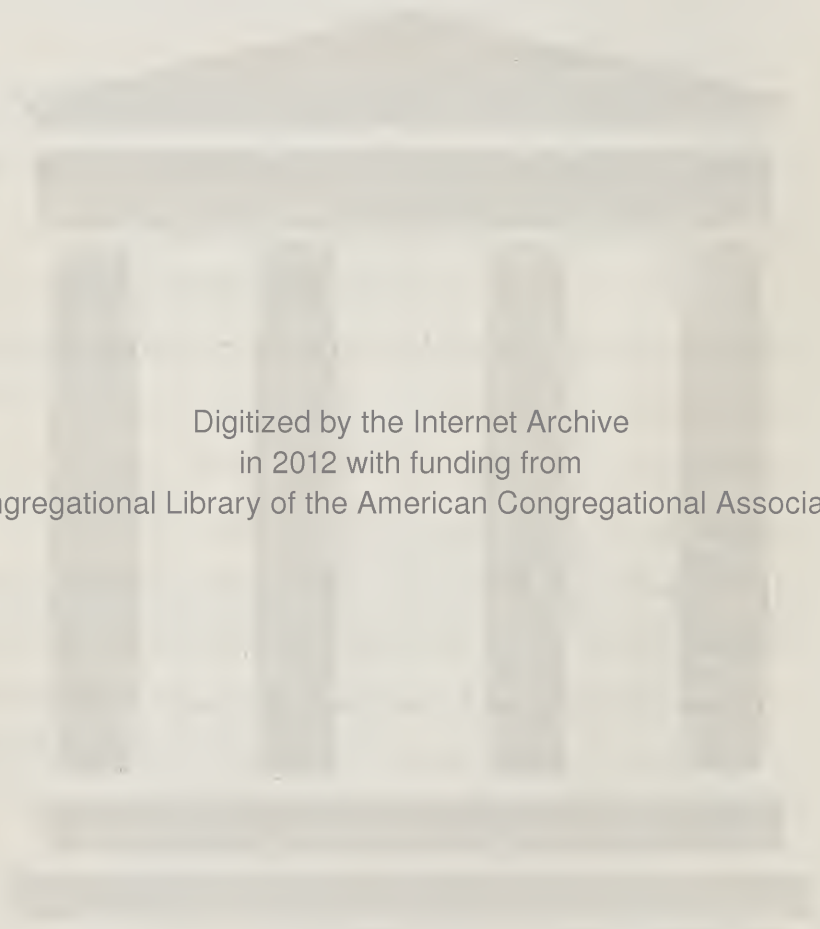
I am affectionately your friend and brother,

JOHN COTTON SMITH.

The Rev. SAMUEL FULLER, D. D.,

“ “ E. M. P. WELLS, D. D.,

“ “ E. L. DROWN.



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CHARITY AND TRUTH.

1 Cor. xiii. 6. "Charity—rejoiceth in the truth."

THE circumstances of this occasion almost demand the consideration of the subject upon which I am to address you. The ordination which has called us together is the consummating act of a change in religious doctrines and ecclesiastical relations. And the change itself brings before the mind the melancholy truth, that the Christian world is not one household, living together in unity of spirit and the bond of peace,—but rather presents a hostile array of rival churches and sects, distracted by mutual jealousy and suspicion, and too often tearing and rending each other instead of doing battle with the common foe. This condition of things in Christendom presents a most important subject for our consideration, and suggests innumerable practical questions. The relations which persons calling themselves Christians sustain to each other, press upon us the apparently rival claims of Charity and Truth. How to be faithful to both is the practical difficulty. We meet with such questions as

these—what is the truth—how much of truth is fundamental—what is to be insisted upon as necessary, and what may be left as matter of opinion—how far does charity require us to go with those who differ from us—and what obstacles does a proper regard for the truth interpose in the way of what charity would seem to present as so desirable—unity of spirit and of organization among all who profess to be the followers of Christ?

I shall endeavor, by God's blessing, to lay down and illustrate some general principles by which such questions as these may perhaps be satisfactorily answered.

It is my earnest desire to be faithful both to Charity and the Truth, and although I cannot hope to meet the views of those with whom truth whatever may be its relative importance is the only consideration, or of those with whom the principle of charity is carried to extremes—I still trust that no essential truth may be compromised for the sake of Charity; and that I shall not be held as an enemy to Charity because I insist upon fundamental truth. My only desire is to do something to adjust, in our minds, the relations of the two.

As the first step in our inquiry, it would be well to bring before our minds the actual state of our community in this respect, so that we might ascertain what is the condition of things, in regard to which the claims of Charity and Truth are to be made.

But there is no time, on this occasion, to do more than simply to notice the fact, that there are certain tendencies, clearly apparent, in the various bodies of Christians into which this community is divided. These tendencies may, I think, be reduced to three classes—one towards rationalism—one towards superstition—and one consisting in a reaction from these extremes towards evangelical religion.

The state of speculative philosophy at the present day is such as greatly to accelerate these tendencies. Its effect must be to gather various religious schools into a few great classes, and to define the boundaries of these classes more sharply than ever before. The philosophical views of Sir William Hamilton are destined, it seems to me, to affect very powerfully the great religious tendencies of the age. Sir William Hamilton's object was, as is well known, to determine the limits of human knowledge; and the result of his investigations is, that we can know logically only the relative, the finite, the conditioned; and that the absolute, the unconditioned, and the infinite are, strictly speaking, beyond the limits of human knowledge. Now if this philosophy becomes prevalent, men will be compelled to choose between faith in a divine revelation, and speculative atheism. Rationalism must become atheistic if reason can give us only the relative and the finite, and those who are appalled at such

a conclusion will be compelled to rely implicitly upon divine revelation for a knowledge of the infinite. Reason will take its proper place in relation to faith, and Anselm's profound words will be recognized as containing the highest wisdom: "I do not know in order that I may believe, but believe in order that I may know." And Pascal's beautiful thought, so beautifully expressed, will be seen to embody the best philosophy: "Divine things are infinitely above nature, and God only can place them in the soul. He has designed that they should pass from the heart into the head, and not from the head into the heart; and so, as it is necessary to know human things in order to love them, it is necessary to love divine things in order to know them."

A consideration of these tendencies, it seems to me, is sufficient to convince us that there are three centres around which the religious tendencies of the age are gradually gathering themselves, and that three great and distinctly defined classes will eventually absorb the endless diversity of religious opinions which now exists. Reason without faith will find its way to some system of philosophic atheism like that of Comte. Reason with faith, and in submission to it, will lead to some evangelical system, for faith must rest upon the Word of God, and there is no Protestant system not evangelical in which the Word of God has preserved its

integrity. Faith without reason will work itself gradually into the superstition of the Church of Rome,—since those superstitions which have most of authority will gradually attract those who are superstitiously inclined.

Upon this view of the present state and tendencies of religious opinion among us, we are prepared to consider what elements there are for cordial sympathy and co-operation in the Christian bodies by which we are surrounded. There is of course in regard to all connected with them, and indeed to all mankind, the sacred duty of charity. We are under the most solemn obligations to entertain kindly feelings towards those who differ most widely from us. But what we wish to know is, whether we may not, without any compromise of the truth, come into closer connection with those who call themselves by the name of our Master. Our own Church has labored heretofore under the suspicion of being specially exclusive and uncharitable; and it becomes us to inquire whether we may not have appeared so, even where the interests of the truth imposed no obligation upon us,—and whether we may not, therefore, have stood in the way of a closer union among Christ's people,—even when that union required no compromise of the truth. Every one's duty in this respect is to be determined by what he considers as necessary or fundamental truth.

And yet, in this very respect, there is danger of a violation of charity ; for why, it may be asked, should one Christian refuse fellowship with another whose learning and religious character are at least equal to his own ? It will, I trust, be thought by those who do not hold evangelical views, that the apparent want of charity in those who make these views fundamental is at least in some degree justified by the fact that they do not stand simply upon their own reason, which may not be any better than that of their opponents,—nor simply upon their own interpretation of the Scriptures,—which they will admit is fallible,—but also upon the fact that these few fundamental points have stood forth prominently, in all ages of Christianity ; sometimes, indeed, with a dim radiance like that of lighthouses glimmering at midnight upon a dark, tempestuous sea ; but sometimes glowing like suns in the heavens. In taking our stand upon orthodox and evangelical views as fundamental, we are sustained not only by our own reason,—not only by our interpretation of Scripture, but by the whole past of the Christian Church. It is, therefore, in no spirit of arrogance, in no want of the largest charity, we trust, but in sincere humility, with a willingness to be led first of all by the Bible and then by the voice of the Christian world in all ages, that we feel bound, in fidelity to the truth, to insist upon the great evangelical doctrines of Redemption as fundamental in the Christian system.

And yet I think we may have been justly chargeable with a want of charity towards those who differ from these views, by failing to enter somewhat into their views of things, to ascertain the various steps by which they have arrived at their results, and to construe favorably certain statements which perhaps mean something to us very different from their original intent. And I think we may have erred greatly in charging certain consequences, which they expressly disown upon the opinions of men; for this is one of the most glaring violations of charity. A system itself may properly be charged with any consequences with which we regard it as logically connected, but not the men by whom the system is held. They are to be judged by the views which they avow, not by those which they disown and reject.

I doubt also whether we have sufficiently considered those circumstances out of which the Unitarian movement took its rise, and the peculiar aspect of Christianity to which it was opposed. At a time when Christian doctrine scarcely existed in New England, except in the most rigid Calvinistic form, there was a natural reaction, and as there were no ancient creeds or liturgy to limit this reaction, it soon assumed the form of Pelagianism, of the most decided type, and was developed into the Unitarianism of New England.

Now it seems to me that every system is entitled to the benefit, if such it is, of being considered in reference to that to which it is opposed. I yield to no one in my admiration for that lofty and uncompromising piety which has been fostered under the sternest Calvinism; but I cannot wonder that when peaceful and prosperous days came to the early New England Christians, that the hearts of some yearned for a faith of milder and more attractive features. The old Calvinism of our fathers was a faith which seems well suited to the hardships and privations of their lot. It invested with such reality and life the covenant relation between God and the believer, and so concentrated, as it were, the whole compassion and love of God upon the little body of the faithful, that it is no wonder that they clung to it while want and suffering compelled them to wring from religion every consolation it could afford. This system, as it was held by our fathers, was like some of our own New England mountains in the midst of wintry storms, cold, rugged, immovable masses of rock—upon which a thousand tempests might wreak their fury in vain. But when these wintry days passed by, what wonder is it that men were allured by the smiling, genial landscape of the valleys, and wandered away, until they found themselves at last bewildered in the midst of barren deserts.

It seems to me also as uncharitable to withhold from those who have been involved in the Unitarian movement, the praise which is due to great pecuniary liberality and to general kindness of disposition. This has been, I freely admit, in no slight degree characteristic of those connected with this system. We are surrounded by enduring monuments of this liberality; and this kindness, in ten thousand forms, has left its monuments in innumerable sorrowing hearts, which it has comforted and relieved.

In considering this system, and particularly that part of it which approaches most nearly to Evangelical doctrine, we must in charity, it seems to me, make a distinction between the faith of the heart and the head. It must be of course, upon this ground, that we believe in the Christian character of those who do not speculatively have faith in Christ as a divine Saviour. I doubt not that this is the speculative belief of multitudes, whose hearts trust as implicitly as ours in the sacrifice and intercession of a Divine Redeemer. They may not admit this idea in words, and yet their Christian life is kept burning and shining, by that central fire in the heart which supreme love and adoration for the Lord Jesus alone could have kindled.

But with such charitable dispositions, and with so much of sympathy in reference to certain phases of this

system, what difficulty stands in the way of a full and free fellowship so far as doctrine is concerned? Why not, it may be said, waive these points of doctrine? But here we are met at once by the demands of what we hold to be, on the ground of reason, of Scripture, and the testimony of all ages of the Christian Church, necessary and fundamental truth. We must insist upon it; conscience will not allow us to waver one hair's breadth in regard to the foundation facts of Christianity,—the Trinity in the Godhead,—the supreme divinity and expiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ,—the native depravity of man, and the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. Our charity goes, as we trust we have shown, where these truths are denied. Our sympathies are called out most largely and warmly towards those who are working their way to a recognition of them. We are glad to claim fellowship even before the language of such comes up to the precision and explicitness which we should desire. If there is any holding back, with us, it is when the real vital point is wanting. For it must be evident that the highest view which may be taken of the character of Christ, even the attributing of divinity to him, is no appreciable approach to our position, unless he is distinctly recognized as God, and the possibility of his being God, and at the same time making in the flesh an expiation for our sins, found in the personal distinc-

tion in the Godhead. Since if he is not really and truly God, however lofty may be his position, he is still a created being, infinitely inferior therefore to God, and no proper object for our adoration and supreme love. The strongest language which can be used, consistently with such a view, does not help the matter. We feel that we have not found Christ.

While such is my view of the positive and imperative demands of the truth, it seems to me that there is still much more room for charity in this direction, than perhaps we have been accustomed to suppose. I have little confidence in the efficacy of the argument with Unitarians, as it has been usually conducted. It rests upon no principles which we hold in common. A generous appreciation of the position of those who differ from us, together with evidences of a hearty and anxious desire on our part, that they might have the happiness of knowing Christ in all the glory and saving power with which he is invested, would do more than ten thousand arguments to impress them favorably towards our views. Argument may be misunderstood. A warm and generous heart, filled with anxious desire for the spiritual welfare of others, is always recognized and felt.

I wish to say a few words in reference to our relations with those who do not differ from us materially in point of doctrine, but who hold entirely

different views in respect to ecclesiastical organization. The circumstances which call us together, at this time, suggest this topic,—for this ordination consummates not only a change in points of doctrine, but also in ecclesiastical relations. It is a profession, not only of orthodox doctrine, but also of adherence to the Episcopal Church. I for one am very anxious that our views, in respect to the organization of the church should be so held and stated, as to conform to what we hold to be the truth, and at the same time relieve us from the suspicion of being exclusive and uncharitable. The points in our principles or practice, which are usually objected to as such, are the reordination of those who have not been episcopally ordained; and the fact that we do not invite into our pulpits those who have not received episcopal ordination. This has, I admit, at first view, the aspect of being uncharitable and exclusive. But we are certainly entitled to claim that in the exercise of charity towards us, the nature and reason of our position should be considered. We believe that the ministry, as constituted with us, is apostolic; that is, to take the very lowest view of it, that such a ministry existed in the time of the Apostles. And to say nothing more, it is not perfectly clear, as I understand it, to those disagreeing with us, that such was not the case. But at any rate, we believe that it

was so. Now, there is nothing uncharitable, certainly, in such a belief. It relates simply to a question of historical fact, and if it obliges us to the pursuit of a certain course, that course cannot be uncharitable. We may hold this point to be a very important one; we may firmly believe that the preservation of the faith is connected with it, and dependent upon it. But how can we express our adherence to this view, except by our practice; and how by our practice, if we make no distinction between a ministry, which does conform to what we believe to be the apostolic model, and one that does not? It is not with us, as is often supposed, a mere question of polity. In that case we admit that our position would be justly chargeable with exclusiveness; but it is a question of the preservation of the truth. We gladly recognize the presence and the saving influence of the truth in other Christian bodies. Our Church has never denied or questioned the validity of the official acts of ministers of the Gospel, not episcopally ordained. We make no claims to a ministry more learned, more holy, or more successful than that of others; but we do claim that with our conscientious conviction, that the ministry, as constituted by the Apostles, is an indispensable means to the most important end, and that although the truth is now to be found elsewhere, still the interests of Christ's kingdom,

in the succession of ages, are bound up with this constitution of the Church; we do claim, I say, that we are not uncharitable in putting these principles into practice, and establishing the rule, that those who minister in our congregations shall be episcopally ordained. To sanction any other practice, would be to deny in act, that which we profess in word.

This division of the Christian world and of our own church also, into various parties, sometimes contending so bitterly with each other, is a most melancholy spectacle, and one is led to inquire whether it must always be so. Will the interests of the truth always require these divisions and mutual jealousies and misunderstandings? If so, how poor a preparation are we here making for the union of the heavenly world. I think, however, that we may readily detect in all this the operation of a law which is working beneficially. We are approaching a time, I firmly believe, when those who agree at all will agree more perfectly; when systems shall have worked themselves out to their results; and when what is unessential shall have been eliminated in the process, and the great body of believers shall be found gathered around the few fundamental principles of the Gospel. But that time is not yet. And still while we see how far we are from such a state of things, we may see how it is that even parties and party spirit are working to that end. A simple love

for the truth and a noble spirit of charity are what must be secured before that end is attained. And in the mean time these very parties and factions under God's providence are carrying things forward in that direction. No one will claim that the best results in church or in state have been brought about by the success of the views of one or another party, but by the action and reaction of one upon the other. So that it is unquestionably a fact that better results have on the whole been attained by the combined action of these various parties, than if one, however pure, had directed and controlled the movement alone. And that is simply to say that God is wiser than any or all of those whom he employs as his instruments in the world.

I trust it will not be thought irrelevant if, in conclusion, I endeavor to point out some respects in which, in my judgment, our own Church is favorably situated in reference to the desire which prevails for more of unity among the followers of Christ. I fear, indeed, that any practical results in that direction, are still far distant, but it is not in vain, it seems to me, that the subject is agitated even now. I am glad, at all events, of the opportunity of speaking a word, which has for its object the bringing more nearly together of those who love the Lord Jesus Christ.

On a moment's reflection we shall see that our own

Church can meet, as no other Christian body can, this longing for union of which I have spoken. This longing manifests itself in various ways, and it has found most significant expression during the religious interest, which has lately prevailed. Now, if there is to be a union of Christian people, it must be upon some basis of truth admitted by all, and recognized as fundamentally necessary. To have no doctrinal basis whatever, no creed at all, is liberal indeed; but it is so liberal, that it reaches beyond Christianity and may include the infidel, the Jew, the Mahometan. The system ceases to be necessarily Christian, when it disowns a creed. To say that the Bible is the creed and the only creed, helps the matter somewhat, to be sure, but we soon find that the question comes up as to the authority of the Bible, or as to what constitutes the Bible. The system cannot pronounce decisively upon these points, without violating its principle of not having any creed. It must leave every one not only to his own interpretation of the Bible, but to determine also what his Bible shall be, and thus it is evident the whole superstructure of Christianity may be swept away. I have known men, who claimed to have no creed but the Bible, and yet who considered only three chapters in the whole Bible as of divine authority. It is evident, therefore, that

those who reject creeds altogether, cannot furnish a basis for the union of Christians.

Then on the other hand there is the difficulty which is the opposite of this. There are others who have creeds, but who have incorporated into them certain articles which they hold indeed as desirable to be believed, but which even they themselves do not hold to be essential to Christian faith. Such articles are those which relate to the relation between the sovereignty of God and the agency of man, or to the proper subjects for baptism, &c., about which, as all agree, Christians may differ. But just so soon as a number of Christians associate themselves together, and establish as a test of communion with them, a belief in certain articles, some of which they themselves admit not to be essential to Christian faith, just so soon do they depart from the true idea of a Church of Christ, since their terms of communion exclude some whom Christ himself has received. Their basis excludes the infidel, it is true, but it excludes many a Christian also, and cannot therefore furnish a basis of union among those who are the followers of Christ.

Now notice for a moment the position of our own Church in reference to this matter. Have we not in the providence of God, a basis for union, in a creed at once comprehensive and fundamental,—so as to exclude everything outside of Christianity, and include every-

thing within it? We require belief only in those few fundamental facts of Christianity which are declared in the Apostles' creed. The clergy indeed are required to subscribe the Thirty-Nine Articles, but not so the people. The creed of our Church is the simple creed of the Church in all ages; distinctive as Christianity itself, and yet comprehending every form and variety of Christian development. Here then and here only is to be found, in this community, a Church which can satisfy this longing and restless striving after Christian union. It is the Church which the masses need, and towards which they must necessarily tend when its true position and character are once understood. Whoever then is a friend to union among the followers of Christ, let him ask himself if there is anywhere so good a prospect of its promotion as in our own Church. I set aside now all claims as to the divine or even apostolic origin of our organization. I say nothing about that, but if you desire that the people of Christ should be one, so as to oppose one common front to the power of sin and death, then I ask you solemnly to consider whether such a consummation is possible except upon the basis of a creed like ours, which excludes all who do not hold what is universally admitted to be the Christian faith, and includes all who do.

But in connection with this desire for union, there is springing up everywhere a desire for something which

will secure the permanence and stability of Christian faith. One great cause of this want of permanence is to be found in these very divisions which we have been considering. The consequence of having no creed is the drifting off of certain portions, at least, of the body towards infidelity; and the consequence of having too minute and particular a creed is, that any variation from it must be followed by separation from the body by which it is held. And so the process of division goes on, until men find it hard to tell what is fundamental, since every variety of religious opinion is represented by some Christian sect. Now there is this peculiarity of the position of the Church which fits it to secure the permanence and stability of Christian truth. It has the most powerful conservative influences, and yet, at the same time, it admits without difficulty schools of doctrine, which, in any other system, must be followed by the endless process of division. We all know that the Calvinist and the Arminian,—the Baptist and the Pædobaptist,—those who hold high views and those who hold low views of the Sacraments,—may all find a home in the Church; while at the same time the Church, unshaken by these various and conflicting systems, holds forth in her Liturgy and Creeds the fundamental truths of Christianity, and proclaiming the remission of sins by faith in Jesus Christ, passes on unchanged through the succeeding generations of the world.

Let me say a word in reference to the need which exists for more of reverence and dignity in the services of the sanctuary, and to the conviction which is becoming quite prevalent that these are to be secured only by liturgical worship. The taste and sober sense of the community are slowly working towards this result. Now suppose that a taste for liturgical worship becomes very general, where is a liturgy that will be at all satisfactory to be found except that of the Episcopal Church? Other liturgies are admitted to be defective, by those who compile them, just so far as they differ from that of the Church. It is impossible that any other can have the impressiveness of this, since none other can possibly have its associations. There is no other liturgy which has come down to us with the accumulated wealth of the associations of every Christian age; none other which has about it the precious savor of the piety of the confessors and martyrs and apostles of the Church. This is an advantage which no one pretends to deny, and which the Church alone possesses. Need I say more to impress upon you the inestimable value of this our heritage, or to incite you to efforts that others may be blessed by it also? We can never know how vastly we are indebted to it for the great spiritual truths which are the principles of our life. We have heard it in childhood and in youth, until it is familiar to us as household words. It has

entered year after year with its exhaustless wealth into our spiritual being,—and as the sweet birds which are caught from the wild wood make melody for us in our homes, so these winged words have been imprisoned in the mysterious chambers of memory, and by day and by night make sacred music to the soul.

I wish finally to say that it is my deep conviction that the system and methods of our Church are favorable to union among Christians since it is by them that the prevalent infidelity of the day may be most successfully met and resisted. This infidelity presents itself in three principal forms,—first, that of the positive philosophy, which denies certainty to anything but phenomena, and which would limit all man's thoughts and efforts and aspirations to the visible and tangible things by which we are surrounded ;—then that which denies the supernaturalism of Christianity, and resolves its wondrous miracles into natural events or mythical narrations ; and then that of Pantheism, the worship of nature or of heroes, and the foundation of that direful doctrine of the necessary progress of the human race, by which it passes, under the operation of irresistible laws, through one form after another of religious belief, until Christianity itself shall give place at last to a higher religion. Then there is the amazing imposture or delusion of Spiritualism,—that strange mingling of fanati-

cism and shrewd calculation, the facts of which are to be found either in skilful jugglery or the effects of natural laws as yet imperfectly understood. All these are hostile to the true progress and well-being of society,—are hostile to morals and to the purity and happiness of social relations,—are fatal to the true dignity and excellence of man, and leave him in his guilt, without a Saviour or the hope of everlasting life.

Now every one who wishes well to his country, and desires the salvation of men, must be anxious to know in what way this fearful onset of infidelity may be rolled back. To meet these various systems by argument seems to me to be doing but little to accomplish the result. What we want is something which will have a silent and constant influence in the community,—some system of things visible and audible, to be seen and heard of men at all times, and which, as monuments of great historic events, keep alive the sentiment of patriotism, may by its presence teach the great lessons of religion. We want some system in the community which in its order and arrangements assumes the great facts of Christianity and thus impresses them upon the mind. We have such a system in the Church, and all will admit that it is not elsewhere to be found. It is our whole tendency to present the Church both as spiritual and visible; it is the whole tendency of other Christians to present it as

spiritual alone. The facts of Christianity are, so to speak, crystallized, in the services of the Church, into a permanent form. No one can tell the incalculable influence of such a system in its ceaseless testimony to the truth. More powerful than any argument, or any appeal, or any teaching, it moves irresistibly the minds even of those who are unconscious of its influence. Let us have a great institution pervading society, in which the fundamental facts of Christianity have clothed themselves with forms, and let this institution be ever visibly and audibly present, having innumerable relations with the life of men, and we need have no fear of national apostasy, and may laugh infidelity to scorn.

There is no time now to speak of the concessions which we might be willing to make to bring about any practical union among Christians. For my part I should consider any concession for such a purpose as a small sacrifice, unless it stood very near the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Charity rejoices in that truth. There may be concessions and compromises everywhere else, but not there. This truth and whatever is essential to it, must be maintained. We feel strong and confident upon such ground as this. Elsewhere we may have doubts and perplexities, but here the evidences accumulate with such vast comprehensiveness and manifold relations, that no room is left with us for

doubt. Nature, God's Word, our own consciences and hearts, the history of Christianity, the history of the world, all cast their rays upon one common centre, the cross of Christ, and from that sacred spot beams forth all the light which has dispelled the shadows of this fallen world. From the darkness of Calvary, the Sun of Righteousness arose to enlighten and revive the earth. That we are sinners, utterly helpless in ourselves, is a fact of which, alas, we can entertain no doubt; that Christ is an Almighty Saviour, we also, with all the powers of our being firmly believe, and it is our only hope of final rest and happiness in the heavenly world.

My dear Brother: You are now to be commissioned to proclaim among us this only foundation for our hope of eternal life. I doubt not you have endeavored through your whole ministerial career, to preach faithfully to sinful men, that they might be brought into the ways of holiness, and prepared for the heavenly world. But a necessity has been laid upon you, like that which was laid upon the Apostle Paul, when he said, "Yea, woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." You have by the experiences of your own heart, as well as by the diligent study of God's word, been brought to see the truth as it is in Jesus, and after

many doubts and fears, have rested in a conviction as firm and lasting, I trust, as your immortality, that Christ is our Almighty Saviour and Redeemer, to be loved with no second love, but to be the object of our supreme affection and adoration. I cannot take it upon myself to counsel you in reference to duties and responsibilities, with which you are more familiar than I, but I can express to you the hearty sympathy, goodwill, and love of those, among whom you enter to-day, as your brethren. And yet suffer me to say a word in regard to the responsibilities of our work. It is a solemn thing, my brother, to be placed in the charge of immortal souls. There are many discouragements, many temptations to draw us from our duty. But remember that the time is short, and that the lips which proclaim the blessed news of eternal life, will ere long be closed and hushed in the silence of the tomb. When we think of this, we cannot be indifferent and unfaithful in our work. And it is a blessed thought, familiar, I know, to your own heart, that in all our difficulties and trials, Christ is with us, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

“ I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom ; preach the word ; be instant in season, out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort

with all long suffering and doctrine. . . . Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." And when the hour of your departure draws near, may the remembrance of many souls already saved, and many more yet to be saved through your ministry, comfort and sustain you with the blessed assurance, that the grace of Christ has been sufficient for you; and may you be able in humble and yet full assurance to exclaim with the Apostle, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

